

REMARKS

After entry of this Amendment, claims 1-4, 8-10, and 12-23, and 25-37 are pending in the Application. Claim 19 has been allowed. Claims 1, 20, 28, 29, and 36 have been amended herein. Claims 28 and 36 have been amended to correct minor informalities. Claims 1, 20 and 29 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim Applicant's invention. Reconsideration of the Application as amended is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 17, 28, 36 and 37 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lutz (DE 38 15 990) in view of Chang (US 5,299,817). Claim 1 has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that the projection that extends into the hollow cavity for limiting travel of an end of a tubular member inserted into the cavity is integrally formed with the upper and/or lower element. It is respectfully submitted that neither Lutz nor Chang, taken singularly or in any permissible combination, anticipate, teach or suggest an integrally formed stop. The bolt (40) disclosed in Chang, which the Examiner refers to as a projecting element, is not shown to be integrally formed with angled member (10). Rather, bolt (40) must necessarily be removable in order to allow tubular connector (20) to be inserted into angled member (10). Once inserted, the tubular connector (20) is secured in place by simultaneously inserting bolt (40) through the side openings (111,112) in angled member (10) and hole (21) of tubular connector (20). If bolt (40) were integrally formed with angled member (10) the bolt would be prevented from engaging hole (21) in tubular connector (20). Accordingly, it is requested that the instant rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 4, 8, and 9 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lutz (DE 38 15 990) in view of Chang (US 5,299,817) and Liu (US 5,696,205). Claims 4, 8, and 9 depend directly or indirectly from Claim 1, and thus the rejection is considered moot in light of the amendment to base Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the instant rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 10, 15, 16, and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as

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being unpatentable over Lutz (DE 38 15 990) in view of Chang (US 5,299,817), Liu (US 5,696,205), and further in view of Roby et al. (US 4,077,644). Claims 10, 15, 16 and 18 depend directly or indirectly from Claim 1, and thus the rejection is considered moot in light of the amendment to base Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the instant rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 12-14 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lutz (DE 38 15 990) in view of Chang (US 5,299,817) and Roby et al. (US 4,077,644). Claims 12-14 depend directly or indirectly from Claim 1, and thus the rejection is considered moot in light of the amendment to base Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the instant rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 20-23, 25, 26, and 29-35 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lutz (DE 38 15 990) in view of Wright (US 1,778,654). Claims 20 and 29 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that the ends of the stop members are disposed within the passage configured for receiving an end of the elongate structural member. It is respectfully submitted that neither Lutz nor Wright, taken singularly or in any permissible combination, anticipate, teach or suggest providing a stop member for obstructing movement of a structural member within a receiving passage, wherein an end of the stop member is positioned within the receiving passage. More specifically, both ends of pin (h') in Wright, which the Examiner refers to as a stop member, are positioned outside of the passage formed in lug (I) for receiving an end of tube (H). The pin is shown to pass entirely through lug (I), and consequently, the ends of the pin are not disposed within the receiving passage. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the instant rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 27 stands rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lutz (DE 38 15 990) in view of Wright (US 1,778,654) and Chang (US 5,299,817). Claim 27 depends directly from Claim 20, and thus the rejection is considered moot in light of the amendment to base Claim 20. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the instant rejection be withdrawn.

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It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment traverses and overcomes all of the Examiner's objections and rejections to the application as originally filed. It is further submitted that this Amendment has antecedent basis in the application as originally filed, including the specification, claims and drawings, and that this Amendment does not add any new subject matter to the application. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested. It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment places the application in suitable condition for allowance; notice of which is requested.

If the Examiner feels that prosecution of the present application can be expedited by way of an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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